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Letter dated 7 July 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I wish to bring the following to your attention.

As you are aware, on 5 July 1982, during the invasion of Lebanon and the occupation of Beirut by the Israeli regime, three members of the staff of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Beirut, namely Seyyed Mohsen Mousavi (Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy), Ahmad Motevaselian (Military Attaché of the Embassy) and Taghi Rastegar Moghadam (a technician from the Embassy), as well as an Iranian journalist, Kazem Akhavan from the Islamic Republic News Agency, were abducted in Lebanon while returning, by a diplomatic vehicle, from Syria to the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in west Beirut.

While travelling on the coastal road between Tripoli and Beirut, the said Iranian officials were stopped and detained, at Barbareh checkpoint in Madfoon area, 40 km north of Beirut, in violation of the most basic provisions governing diplomatic immunities and in flagrant contempt of the most fundamental principles of international law, by Christian paramilitary forces named Lebanese Forces (Alghovat-Al-Lobnanieh) who were then under the control and command of the Israeli regime's army. .

There are various news reports and numerous signs well indicating that the said Iranian officials were immediately handed over to the Israeli military forces after their abduction, as Beirut was occupied by the Israeli regime at the time. They were subsequently taken to Israeli prisons and have been since then under the captivity of the Israeli regime. This illegal and inhumane act is against the fundamental international rules and principles, and also contravenes numerous United Nations resolutions, including resolutions in which the General Assembly, inter alia, "strongly condemns acts of violence against diplomatic and consular missions and representatives" and emphasizes that such acts can never be justified, and "urges States to take all appropriate measures at the national and international levels to prevent any acts of violence against the missions, representatives and

officials, including during a period of armed conflict", and also "urges all States to ensure that such acts of violence are fully investigated with a view to bringing offenders to justice".

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is of the strong view and belief that the Israeli regime is responsible for this abduction and for the fate of the said Iranian diplomats and journalist. No credible piece of evidence has ever been presented to indicate the martyrdom of the said Iranian officials to date. To the contrary, various evidences, including the assertions by some of those who have been in Israeli prisons or have visited the said prisons suggest that they are still alive and are in the hands of the Israeli regime.

Twenty-six long years have passed since this outrageous abduction. And throughout all these years, and in the absence of any meaningful action by the United Nations to secure their release, the said Iranian diplomats and journalist have been languishing in Israeli prisons, and their families have been enduring enormous pain and suffering in anguish and disillusionment. We expect the United Nations to address this grave illegal act that undermines some of the most basic principles on which international relations are based and operate. The Islamic Republic of Iran calls upon the Security Council and the Secretary-General to live up to their responsibilities under the United Nations Charter without further delay by reacting to the illegal abduction and continued unlawful detention of the Iranian diplomats and journalist by the Israeli regime, and by helping to secure their safe and immediate release.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 83, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammad **Khazaee**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative